

Executive Registry

11-1393

20 February 1959

enc
William Benton, Esq.
Publisher & Chairman
Encyclopaedia Britannica
342 Madison Avenue
New York 17, New York

Dear Bill:

I had already heard that your trip was going forward. I am inclined to think that the procedures you are following are probably the best under present circumstances. If, as seems to be the case, there are tensions developing between India and its big neighbor to the north, you might find some reluctance on the part of your Indian friends to intervene. The direct approach you have made is probably the best. You are dealing with people who are very sensitive and they are likely to resent action through intermediaries. However, this is only my judgment and it might well prove to be wrong.

I shall be interested to hear if this finally works out satisfactorily.

STAT

Sincerely,

AWD/ji
1 - DCI
1 - ER w/basic

Signature
Allen W. Dulles
Director

EXECUTIVE REGISTRY

11-1395

ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA
342 MADISON AVENUE
SUITE 702
NEW YORK 17, N.Y.

WILLIAM BENTON
PUBLISHER & CHAIRMAN

February 13, 1959

The Honorable Allen Dulles
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D. C.

Dear Allen:

for China

As you will see from the attached letter to Walter Robertson, I have my passport from the State Department. Now all I have to do is to get the visa from the Chinese. I'm sending the attached cable through the Chinese Embassy in London, with the assistance of Britannica's London office. Do you have any further suggestions on how I might proceed? I have for long been on good terms with Madame Pundit and Prime Minister Nehru. Indeed, I visited them at their home in Allahabad in 1937 - and furnished him with books and magazines during some of his jail sentences. I have thought of appealing to him for help. Do you have any knowledge of how I might be effective working through anybody in Great Britain?

Many thanks for any guidance you can give me.

Sincerely,

Bill Benton
William Benton

WB:op
Att.

P.S. - And thanks for steering me to Mr. Robertson!))

February 12, 1950

The Honorable Walter S. Robertson
Assistant Secretary of State
State Department
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am greatly pleased this morning to have a letter from Andy Harding stating that the Britannia is being added to the list of news gathering organizations authorized to designate one representative for travel to China. I am grateful to you for your assistance on this. If you have any suggestions as to how I can best proceed to seek a visa from the Chinese government, I will be most grateful to you for them.

Sincerely,

William Benton

arh

Chou En-lai
Premier
People's Republic of China - Peking, China

BECAUSE I REGARD THE SUBJECT OF THIS CABLEGRAM AS OF TOP IMPORTANCE TO THE WORLD OF SCHOLARSHIP IN THE WEST, AS WELL AS TO THE PEOPLE OF CHINA AND THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA I FEEL WARRANTED IN DIRECTING THIS CABLE TO YOUR EXCELLENCY.

I WISH TO VISIT THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA IN MY ROLE AS OWNER AND PUBLISHER OF THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA. MY PRIMARY PURPOSE IS TO LEARN HOW TO BRING UP TO DATE, IMPROVE AND EXPAND THE MANY ARTICLES CONCERNING CHINA IN THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA.

PLEASE CONSIDER THIS MY APPLICATION FOR A VISA TO CHINA COVERING A PERIOD OF FOUR TO SIX WEEKS IN LATE SPRING OR EARLY FALL OF THIS YEAR. I HOPE THAT IT WILL BE POSSIBLE FOR ME TO BRING WITH ME MY WIFE AND AN INTERPRETER BUT I AM PREPARED TO COME ALONE.

I AM SURE YOUR EXCELLENCY APPRECIATES THAT THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA IS THE FOREMOST WORK OF REFERENCE IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE. UNDER OUR POLICY OF CONTINUOUS AND ANNUAL REVISION WE ATTEMPT TO KEEP ABREAST OF ALL IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. OUR "CHINA" CLASSIFICATION TODAY CONTAINS 124 ARTICLES TOTALLING 150,000 WORDS. THIS IS TOO FEW AND TOO LITTLE AND THESE ARTICLES DO NOT ADEQUATELY REFLECT THE DEVELOPMENTS OF RECENT YEARS IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC. HUNDREDS OF OTHER ARTICLES IN OTHER CLASSIFICATIONS WHICH DEAL WITH CHINA ARE SIMILARLY OUTDATED. FURTHER, I PLAN TO GATHER MATERIAL FOR A 25,000-WORD ARTICLE I SHALL WRITE MYSELF FOR THE BRITANNICA BOOK-OF-THE-YEAR, ISSUED AS AN ANNUAL SUPPLEMENT TO THE SET. THIS ARTICLE WILL DEAL LARGELY WITH IDEOLOGICAL, CULTURAL, EDUCATIONAL AND SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC.

BECAUSE I HAVE IN THE PAST SERVED AS UNITED STATES ASSISTANT SECRETARY

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OF STATE AND ALSO AS A UNITED STATES SENATOR, I WANT TO STRESS THE FACT THAT I HOLD NO PUBLIC OFFICE NOW AND THAT MY PRESENT APPLICATION IS WHOLLY IN MY ROLE AS A PRIVATE AMERICAN CITIZEN AND A PUBLISHER. AS CHAIRMAN OF ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA, INC., OF THE UNITED STATES I AM ALSO RESPONSIBLE FOR ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA LTD. OF LONDON AND OTHER WHOLLY-OWNED SUBSIDIARIES, AND I AM ASKING THAT THIS VISA APPLICATION BE TRANSMITTED TO YOU THROUGH MY LONDON OFFICE.

BECAUSE OF THE RANGE AND SCALE OF ENCYCLOPAEDIA REVISIONS THAT SEEM NECESSARY I SHALL WANT TO EXPLORE WHILE I AM IN CHINA THE POSSIBILITY OF SECURING A REPRESENTATIVE IN PEKING FOR AT LEAST A FEW MONTHS.

MAY I ADD THAT MY EDITORS AND I ARE DEEPLY CONSCIOUS OF THE HISTORIC ROLE OF CHINA IN THE INVENTION OF THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA FORM? WE ARE ALSO CONSCIOUS OF THE MAJOR AND GROWING IMPORTANCE OF ALL OF ASIA IN WORLD AFFAIRS. FINALLY, HAVING SPENT THREE INTERESTING MONTHS AS A TOURIST IN CHINA IN 1937 I ALSO AM EAGER TO OBSERVE THE GREAT CHANGES TIME AND HISTORY HAVE BROUGHT.

I HOPE I MAY LOOK FORWARD TO A FAVORABLE RESPONSE TO THIS VISA APPLICATION, AND ASK THAT YOU TRANSMIT IT TO ME THROUGH MY COMPANY, ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA LTD., 11 BELGRAVE ROAD, LONDON S.W.1.

Sincerely,

William Benton

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